

COVID-19 Workforce Survey

Research Report

8 September 2020



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Summary

Background

This report is part of a series of bi-weekly surveys of all councils in England, Wales and Northern Ireland collecting key workforce data on how the sector is responding to COVID-19. An online survey is emailed to heads of human resources, or a nominated contact, in councils from England, Wales and Northern Ireland on alternate Wednesdays. The data requested relates to the week ending the preceding Friday. The intention is that this collection is the single national source through which such data is gathered, and it will, as appropriate, be shared with government departments and others in addition to providing comparator information for councils.

This report relates to the survey sent out on 26 August 2020. The overall response rate was 55 per cent and covered over a third of the total workforce.

Key findings

- Some 26 per cent of councils reported recruiting additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc) in the week ending 21 August 2020. In total 1,225 additional staff had been recruited in responding authorities: the median number of staff per authority was three and the mean was 29.
- More than a third of councils (101) recorded deaths in service since lockdown. A total of 215 deaths in service were reported by respondents since the start of lockdown (cause not specified).
- Twenty-four per cent of councils reported that they had fully furloughed at least one member of staff. In total, responding authorities reported there were 4,854 staff furloughed full-time in the week ending 21 August 2020, which was one per cent of the current workforce.
- In addition, 21 per cent of councils reported that they had partially furloughed at least one member of staff. In total, respondents reported there were 2,666 staff furloughed part-time in the week ending 21 August 2020, which was 0.5 per cent of the current workforce.
- The main reason given for furloughing staff was that the service had stopped (85 per cent) or that funding had stopped (49 per cent).
- Some 63 per cent of councils had redeployed staff. In total, in the responding authorities there were 6,090 staff redeployed in the week ending 21 August 2020, which was one per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was 4 and the mean was 34.
- Just over eight out of ten councils (83 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable for work. In total, respondents reported there were 22,028 staff unavailable for work in the week ending 21 August

2020, four per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 27 and the mean was 116.

- Fifteen per cent of staff were unavailable through 'self-isolation (other)' and 52 per cent were unavailable due to 'non-COVID sickness'.
- When asked whether individual services had enough staff to run them normally or not, the service most badly affected during the week ending 21 August was schools: 32 per cent of councils reported they were operating with moderate or severe disruption due to staffing numbers. Also badly affected were adults and children's services, with 29 per cent and 24 per cent of councils respectively reporting moderate or severe disruption.
- When asked to assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff to run services normally or not, 57 per cent of councils report minor or moderate disruption and 43 per cent were operating normally.
- Councils that had gone through a local lockdown in the week ending 21 August (there were 20) were asked about the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 testing for staff. Eighty per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE they needed; whilst five per cent had less than they needed. Seventy per cent said all the staff who need testing can access it, whilst 30 per cent said most of the staff can access it.
- Looking ahead, councils were asked if they were experiencing significant difficulties recruiting for some posts or not: 186 (91 per cent) said they were. Councils were subsequently asked to choose from a list of specialist occupations where they were experiencing difficulties: 55 per cent of councils were having difficulties recruiting children's social workers, 42 per cent were having difficulties recruiting planning officers and 40 per cent were having difficulties recruiting legal professionals.
- Councils were asked to choose the five occupations or roles where recruitment difficulties were most acute. Sixty per cent of the 62 councils who answered the question had acute difficulties recruiting children's social workers.
- Out of the thirty-five councils who had said they had acute difficulties in recruiting children's social workers, 43 per cent said they had both difficulty recruiting generally and difficulty recruiting the required expertise, experience or qualification.

Introduction

Councils face significant challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has required a joined-up approach between government departments, health agencies, local resilience fora and national agencies like the Local Government Association (LGA), all working with and trying to support councils. The LGA, National Association of Regional Employers (the collective body comprising all the regional employers organisations) and PPMA (the membership association for HR and OD professionals in the public sector) joined forces to coordinate an approach to workforce data collection in the sector.

To provide councils with the intelligence to effectively compare progress and plan locally, regionally and nationally, a short workforce survey was sent out to all heads of human resources in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Findings from the survey will give councils a stronger position to build capacity in partnership with others, give the LGA and associations the evidence needed to ask government for support and resources, and help shape government thinking as we emerge from lockdown.

Methodology

On the 26 August 2020, the LGA's Research and Information Team sent an online survey to human resources contacts in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (a total of 372 councils). The survey was in the field for one week. A total of 204 councils responded, which is a response rate of 55 per cent.

Table 1 and **Table 2** provide a breakdown of responses by authority type and region. Whilst these results should strictly be taken as a snapshot of the views of this group of respondents, rather than representative of all heads of human resources, this level of response means that the results are likely to provide a good indication of the position of the sector more widely.

Type of authority	Total number	Number of responses	Response rate %
District	188	105	56
County	25	18	72
London borough	33	19	58
Metropolitan district	36	16	44
Unitary	57	38	67
Welsh unitary	22	8	36
Local government districts (NI)	11	0	0
All	372	204	55

Table 2: Response rate by region

Region	Total number	Number of responses	Response rate %
Eastern	50	41	82
East Midlands	45	29	64
London	33	19	58
North East	12	8	67
North West	41	21	51
South East	70	37	53
South West	33	13	39
Wales	22	8	36
West Midlands	33	10	30
Yorkshire and Humber	22	18	82
Northern Ireland	11	0	0

Technical notes

- Where tables and figures report the base, the description refers to the group of people who were asked the question. The number provided refers to the number of respondents who answered each question. Please note that bases vary throughout the survey.
- Throughout the report percentages in figures and tables may add to more than 100 per cent due to rounding.

COVID-19 Workforce Survey: week ending 21 August 2020

This section contains analysis of the full results from the survey.

Size of local authority workforce

Workforce as at 1 March 2020

In order to establish a baseline, councils were asked the number of staff employed by the council on the 1st March 2020, pre-lockdown. The councils that responded to the survey employed 536,942 staff or approximately a third of the total local government workforce.

184 single tier and county councils have responsibility for schools. As it is not always possible to separate out school-based staff from human resources (HR) systems, a supplementary question was asked to determine how many returns included school-based staff.

Of the 99 councils that responded to the survey and had responsibility for schools, 19 (nine per cent) reported that their return included school-based staff. For expediency this report doesn't separate those that included/excluded schools-based staff as it was felt that it would add significantly to the burden on councils returning the data and would have little effect on the overall findings.

Recruitment week ending 21 August 2020

Councils are at the forefront of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to continue to deliver vital services to their communities they have had to be flexible in how they deploy their workforce in order to increase capacity in high demand services or to fill gaps in services caused by the pandemic.

One option available to councils is the recruitment of additional staff. To understand the scale of recruitment, councils were asked whether they had recruited additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc) during the week 21 August 2020.

Of the councils that responded 54 (26 per cent) reported recruiting additional staff: in total 1,225 additional staff were recruited during the week ending 21 August 2020. The median number of staff per council was 3 and the mean was 29.

Table 3: Has the council recruited additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc during week ending 21 August 2020)?

	Yes	%	Total	Median	Mean
County	6	33	20	5	5
District	13	12	386	2	32
London borough	10	53	631	7	9
Metropolitan borough	8	50	69	4	12
Unitary	13	34	26	3	3
Welsh unitary	4	50	93	5	23
English single tier	31	42	726	3	33
All councils	54	26	1225	3	29

Base: all authorities (204 councils – 18 counties, 104 districts, 19 London boroughs, 16 metropolitan boroughs, 38 unitary, 8 Welsh unitary, 73 English single tier)

Current headcount as at 21 August 2020

Total headcount for those councils that responded has increased by 0.5 per cent since the 1 March 2020 and now stands at 493,672 on the week ending 21 August 2020.

Table 4: Change in headcount from 1 March – 21 August 2020

	At 1 March	At 12 June	% change
County	122,929	124,743	1.5
District	48,798	49,223	0.9
London borough	62,224	62,844	1.0
Metropolitan borough	91,832	91,372	-0.5
Unitary	122,738	122,829	0.1
Welsh unitary	427,09	42,661	-0.1
English single tier	276,794	277,045	0.1
All councils	491,230	493,672	0.5

Base: all authorities (204 councils – 18 counties, 105 districts, 19 London boroughs, 16 metropolitan boroughs, 38 unitary, 8 Welsh unitary, 73 English single tier)

Death in service

Councils were asked to provide details on the number of staff that have died in service since 24 March 2020 (lockdown). Of the 200 councils that answered this question, 101 (51 per cent) recorded a total of 215 deaths in service as of 21 August 2020. Councils were not asked the cause of death, so this figure relates to all causes not only COVID-19 deaths.

Table 5: Since 24 March when lockdown started, how many local authority staff, if any, have died in service?

	No. deaths	No. of councils recording 1 or more deaths
County	46	16
District	30	25
London borough	28	14
Metropolitan borough	39	11
Unitary	57	30
Welsh unitary	15	5
English single tier	124	55
All councils	215	101

Base: all authorities (200 councils – 18 counties, 104 districts, 19 London boroughs, 13 metropolitan boroughs, 38 unitary, 8 Welsh unitary, 70 English single tier)

Furloughed staff

Councils were asked to provide details of staff that were furloughed – full-time and part-time – in the week ending 21 August 2020. Of councils that answered the question about full-time furloughing, 46 (24 per cent) reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff.

In total there were 4,854 staff furloughed full-time in responding councils in the week ending 21 August, one per cent of their current workforce. Of those councils that had furloughed staff full-time, the median number was 46 and the mean was 106; but this varied considerably across different types of authority.

Table 6: No. of staff furloughed full time (week ending 21 August)					
				Of those councils with furloughed staff	
	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Median	Mean
County	7	47	1224	73	175
District	18	17	1116	32	62
London borough	4	22	133	13	33
Metropolitan borough	4	33	332	40	83
Unitary	8	23	1054	62	132
Welsh unitary	5	71	995	155	199
English single tier	16	25	1519	40	95
All councils	46	24	4854	46	106

Base: all authorities (190 councils – 13 counties, 103 districts, 18 London boroughs, 12 metropolitan boroughs, 35 unitary, 7 Welsh unitary, 65 English single tier)

Of councils that answered the question about part-time furloughing 40 (21 per cent) reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff on this basis.

In total there were 2,666 staff partially furloughed in responding councils in the week ending 21 August, 0.5 cent of their current workforce. Of those councils that had furloughed staff part-time, the median number was 13 and the mean was 67, but this varied considerably across different types of authority.

Table 7: No. of staff furloughed part time (week ending 21 August)

	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Of those councils with furloughed staff	
				Median	Mean
County	6	40	978	92	163
District	21	20	711	8	34
London borough	1	6	65	65	35
Metropolitan borough	3	25	391	70	130
Unitary	7	20	409	24	58
Welsh unitary	2	29	112	56	56
English single tier	11	17	865	33	79
All councils	40	21	2666	13	67

Base: all authorities (190 councils – 13 counties, 103 districts, 18 London boroughs, 12 metropolitan boroughs, 35 unitary, 7 Welsh unitary, 65 English single tier)

Reason staff were furloughed

The councils that had furloughed staff in the week ending 21 August 2020 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason the member(s) of staff had been furloughed, and 50 were able to provide the reason or reasons.

In the week ending 21 August 2020, 85 per cent of staff were furloughed because the ‘Service has been stopped’ and 49 per cent of staff furloughed as ‘Funding has stopped’. The pattern varied across authority types: in districts 75 per cent of staff were furloughed due to ‘Service has been stopped’, while in London boroughs 64 per cent of staff were furloughed due to ‘Funding has stopped’.

Table 8: For those staff furloughed, what is/are the reason/s?

	Funding has stopped	Staff are shielding	Caring responsibilities	Service has been stopped	Other reasons
	% staff	% staff	% staff	% staff	% staff
County	81	0	0	12	7
District	8	1	0	75	15
London borough	64	0	0	36	0
Metropolitan borough	0	0	0	100	0
Unitary	34	1	0	62	3
Welsh unitary	0	5	0	94	0
English single tier	26	1	0	71	2
All councils	49	2	0	85	3

Base: all authorities with furloughed staff (50 councils – 7 counties, 25 districts, 3 London boroughs, 3 metropolitan boroughs, 7 unitary, 5 Welsh unitary, 13 English single tier)

Redeployed staff

Councils were asked to indicate the number of staff that had been redeployed in the week ending 21 August 2020, either formally or informally. Of councils that answered the question, 112 (63 per cent) reported that they had redeployed at least one member of staff.

In total there were 6,090 staff redeployed in the week ending 21 August, one per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was 4 and the mean was 34.

	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Median	Mean
County	9	82	1154	84	105
District	50	51	737	1	7
London borough	15	79	915	21	48
Metropolitan borough	11	85	1568	43	121
Unitary	20	67	1142	13	38
Welsh unitary	7	100	574	71	82
English single tier	46	74	3625	20	58
All councils	112	63	6090	4	34

Base: all authorities (179 councils – 11 counties, 99 districts, 19 London boroughs, 13 metropolitan boroughs, 30 unitary, 7 Welsh unitary, 62 English single tier)

Unavailable for work

Councils were asked to indicate the number of staff that were unavailable for work in the week ending 21 August 2020. Of councils that answered the question, 157 (83 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable.

In total there were 22,028 staff unavailable for work in responding authorities in the week ending 21 August, six per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 27 and the mean was 116.

	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Median	Mean
County	16	100	4935	197	308
District	73	72	2384	8	23
London borough	18	95	2378	61	125
Metropolitan borough	14	100	4412	314	315
Unitary	31	91	6549	109	193
Welsh unitary	5	100	1370	165	274
English single tier	63	94	13339	118	199
All councils	157	83	22028	27	116

Base: all authorities (190 councils – 16 counties, 102 districts, 19 London boroughs, 14 metropolitan boroughs, 34 unitary, 5 Welsh unitary, 67 English single tier)

Reason staff were unavailable for work

The 157 councils that reported they had at least one or more member of staff unavailable for work in the week ending 21 August 2020 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason for them being unavailable, and 155 were able to provide the reason.

In the week ending 21 August 2020, 52 per cent of staff were unavailable because of 'Non-COVID sickness' and 15 per cent were unavailable due to 'Self-isolation (other)'. Reasons for self-isolation (other) included being in an at-risk group, because the staff member believed they were symptomatic or because the staff member shared a household with someone who was symptomatic.

The pattern varied across authority types: in counties five per cent of staff were unavailable due to 'Confirmed/suspected COVID'.

Table 7: For those staff currently unavailable for work, what is/are the reason/s?

	Non- COVID sickness	Confirmed/ Suspected COVID	Self- isolation (Track and trace)	Self- isolation (Other)	Caring for dependents/ at risk relative/som eone who is sick	Other reason
	% staff	% staff	% staff	% staff	% staff	% staff
County	63	5	0	11	2	19
District	48	1	0	9	2	40
London borough	63	4	0	25	4	4
Metropolitan borough	49	2	0	21	3	26
Unitary	45	2	3	13	2	35
Welsh unitary	57	2	0	15	20	6
English single tier	49	2	2	17	3	28
All councils	52	2	1	15	4	26

Base: all authorities with staff unavailable for work (155 councils – 16 counties, 71 districts, 18 London boroughs, 14 metropolitan boroughs, 31 unitary, 5 Welsh unitary, 63 English single tier)

Service disruption

When asked whether individual services had enough staff to run them normally or not, the service most badly affected was schools: 32 per cent of single tier and county councils reported they were operating with moderate or severe disruption due to staffing numbers. Also badly affected were adults and children's services, with 29 per cent and 24 per cent of councils respectively reporting moderate or severe disruption. A fifth (22 per cent) of public health services reported similar levels of disruption, with 7 per cent saying it was severe.

When asked to assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff to run services normally or not, 57 per cent of councils reported minor or moderate disruption and 43 per cent were operating normally.

Table 12: Please select the status of the services to the show if there are enough staff to run the service normally or not.

	Base	Operating normally	Operating with minor disruption	Operating with moderate disruption	Operating with severe disruption
	No. councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils
Adult social care (directly employed)	97	36	35	28	1
Bereavement services	136	66	24	9	1
Children's services	95	45	31	22	2
Environment health	181	49	33	15	3
Household waste (doorstep collection)	164	71	21	8	0
Housing and homelessness services	183	61	25	12	2
Planning	193	62	29	8	1
Public Health	123	48	30	15	7
Revenue and Benefits	176	62	26	10	2
Schools	69	36	32	25	7
Trading standards	91	55	33	10	2
Overall council	198	43	43	14	0

Base: all authorities (base for each category varied by authority type)

Availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Only councils that had gone through a local lockdown in the week ending 21 August were asked to indicate whether they had enough of the correct type of PPE for those staff that needed it. A total of 20 (ten per cent of councils who responded to the survey) answered the question, of which 80 per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE; whilst five per cent had less than they needed.

Table 13: At present, do you have enough of the correct PPE for those local authority staff who need it or not?

	More than we need	About what we need	Less than we need	We don't need it
	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils
County	-	-	-	-
District	0	67	0	17
London borough	0	100	0	0
Metropolitan borough	0	86	14	0
Unitary	25	75	0	0
Welsh unitary	-	-	-	-
English single tier	7	86	7	0
All councils	5	80	5	5

Base: all authorities in lockdown (20 councils – 0 counties, 6 districts, 3 London boroughs, 7 metropolitan boroughs, 4 unitary, 0 Welsh unitary, 14 English single tier)

Availability of testing

Councils that had gone through a local lockdown in the week ending 21 August were also asked to indicate whether staff who needed it were able to access testing or not. A total of 20 (ten per cent of councils who responded to the survey) answered the question, of which 30 per cent said most of the staff that need testing can access it.

Table 14: And would you say that, currently, the staff who need testing are able to access it or not?

	All the staff that need testing can access it	Most of the staff that need testing can access it	Some of the staff that need testing can access it	None of the staff that need testing can access it	None of our staff need testing
	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils
County	-	-	-	-	-
District	100	0	0	0	0
London borough	0	100	0	0	0
Metropolitan borough	57	43	0	0	0
Unitary	100	0	0	0	0
Welsh unitary	-	-	-	-	-
English single tier	57	43	0	0	0
All councils	70	30	0	0	0

Base: all authorities in lockdown (20 councils – 0 counties, 6 districts, 3 London boroughs, 7 metropolitan boroughs, 4 unitary, 0 Welsh unitary, 14 English single tier)

Planning ahead

Recruitment difficulties

Councils were asked if they were experiencing significant difficulties recruiting for some occupations and roles: 186 (91 per cent) said they were. Those that had answered yes to this question were then subsequently asked to choose from a list of specialist occupations where they were experiencing difficulties. Table 15 shows 55 per cent of councils were having difficulties recruiting children's social workers and 40 per cent were having difficulties recruiting planning officers. Other occupations and roles in which councils said they were having difficulties recruiting included support workers, cooks, adult care assistants, school crossing patrol and learning disability nurses.

From the specialist occupations and roles they were having difficulties recruiting, councils were asked to choose the five where difficulties are most acute. This is either if their council has a large number of staff vacancies for some posts or it has a small number of vacancies that have a big impact. Sixty per cent of councils who answered the question had acute difficulties recruiting children's social workers. This can be seen in Table 16.

Table 15: From the list of specialist occupations and roles below, please tick those where your council is experiencing recruitment difficulties

	County	District	London borough	Metropolitan borough	Unitary	Welsh unitary	English single tier	All councils
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Accountants	15	14	25	17	0	0	8	11
Adult's social workers	62	0	75	0	56	50	46	34
Building control officers	0	29	50	0	6	50	12	16
Chartered surveyors	15	24	75	33	13	0	27	23
Children's social workers	92	0	75	83	81	50	81	55
Economic development officers	23	5	0	0	0	0	0	6
Educational psychologists	46	0	75	17	25	0	31	23
Engineers	31	5	50	33	19	0	27	19
Environmental health officers	0	48	75	33	19	50	31	31
Health visitors	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Homelessness officers	0	24	0	17	6	0	8	11
ICT professionals	15	19	75	17	19	50	27	23
Legal professionals	46	33	100	67	25	0	46	40
Mental health social workers	54	0	50	17	31	50	31	26
Occupational therapists (adults')	54	0	50	17	31	0	31	24
Occupational therapists (children's)	31	0	50	0	25	0	23	16
Regulatory services officers	0	0	50	0	0	0	8	3
Planning officers	38	67	75	17	13	0	23	40
Public health officers	15	0	25	17	13	50	15	11
School nurses	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Test and trace team leaders	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	0	0	25	17	0	0	8	3
Trading standards officers	31	0	50	0	6	0	12	11
Youth workers	0	0	25	0	0	0	4	2
Other	31	5	0	17	0	0	4	10

Base: all authorities experiencing recruitment difficulties (62 councils – 13 counties, 21 districts, 4 London boroughs, 6 metropolitan boroughs, 16 unitary, 2 Welsh unitary, 26 English single tier)

Table 16: For those specialist occupations and roles where you have difficulties recruiting, below, please tick up to five where the difficulties are most acute.

	County	District	London borough	Metropolitan borough	Unitary	Welsh unitary	English single tier	All councils
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Accountants	17	16	25	17	0	0	8	12
Adult's social workers	67	0	75	0	64	50	50	37
Building control officers	0	32	50	0	7	50	13	18
Chartered surveyors	17	26	75	33	14	0	29	25
Children's social workers	100	0	75	83	93	50	88	60
Economic development officers	25	5	0	0	0	0	0	7
Educational psychologists	50	0	75	17	29	0	33	25
Engineers	33	5	50	33	21	0	29	21
Environmental health officers	0	53	75	33	21	50	33	33
Health visitors	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Homelessness officers	0	26	0	17	7	0	8	12
ICT professionals	17	21	75	17	21	50	29	25
Legal professionals	50	37	100	67	29	0	50	44
Mental health social workers	58	0	50	17	36	50	33	28
Occupational therapists (adults')	58	0	50	17	36	0	33	26
Occupational therapists (children's)	33	0	50	0	29	0	25	18
Regulatory services officers	0	0	50	0	0	0	8	4
Planning officers	42	74	75	17	14	0	25	44
Public health officers	17	0	25	17	14	50	17	12
School nurses	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Test and trace team leaders	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	0	0	25	17	0	0	8	4
Trading standards officers	33	0	50	0	7	0	13	12
Youth workers	0	0	25	0	0	0	4	2
Other	33	5	0	17	0	0	4	11

Base: authorities experiencing recruitment difficulties (56 councils – 12 counties, 19 districts, 4 London boroughs, 6 metropolitan boroughs, 14 unitary, 2 Welsh unitary, 24 English single tier)

Table 17: For each of these roles where you have acute difficulties, please indicate whether the recruitment difficulty is in recruiting generally, or recruiting at the required level of expertise/experience/qualification?

	Base	Difficulty recruiting generally	Difficulty recruiting required expertise, experience or qualification	Both	Don't know
	No. councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils
Accountants	2	50	0	50	0
Adult's social workers	15	40	20	40	0
Building control officers	7	14	57	29	0
Chartered surveyors	7	43	29	29	0
Children's social workers	30	27	30	43	0
Economic development officers	2	0	50	50	0
Educational psychologists	8	50	25	13	13
Engineers	5	40	40	20	0
Environmental health officers	12	25	42	33	0
Health visitors	0	-	-	-	-
Homelessness officers	3	33	33	33	0
ICT professionals	9	44	44	11	0
Legal professionals	16	38	31	31	0
Mental health social workers	11	18	27	55	0
Occupational therapists (adults')	7	29	0	57	14
Occupational therapists (children's)	4	25	25	50	0
Regulatory services officers	17	24	35	41	0
Planning officers	2	50	50	0	0
Public health officers	0	-	-	-	-
School nurses	1	0	100	0	0
Test and trace team leaders	0	-	-	-	-
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	0	-	-	-	-
Trading standards officers	1	0	0	0	0
Youth workers	0	-	-	-	-
Other	3	0	0	0	0

Base: all responding to question and category applicable to the council, categories presented varied by authority type.

Where councils had ticked that they had acute difficulties recruiting certain roles, they were then asked to indicate whether the difficulty is in recruiting generally or recruiting at the required level of expertise/experience/qualification. Out of the thirty councils who had said they had acute difficulties in recruiting Children's social workers, 43 per cent said they had both difficulty recruiting generally and difficulty recruiting the required expertise, experience or qualification.

Annex A: Questionnaire

COVID - 19 Workforce Collection

Q1.1 Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

If you would like to see **an overview of the questions** before completing the survey online, you can access a PDF here: [Covid 19 workforce collection](#)

You can navigate through the questions using the buttons at the bottom of each page. If you stop before completing the return, you can come back to this page using the link supplied in the email and you will be able to continue where you left off.

All responses will be treated confidentially. In order that councils do not get multiple requests for such data, the Local Government Association will share the data provided by you in this survey in confidence with the following organisations:

- Other councils (including in LG Inform, via sign-in)
- Regional employers' organisations
- Welsh Local Government Association
- Northern Ireland Local Government Association
- Relevant government departments
- Welsh Government
- Northern Ireland Assembly
- All local resilience fora (LRFs) (through the medium of the LRF dashboard)
- Bain and Company (purely for the purpose of updating the LRF dashboard)

Any information that is published or shared outside of that arrangement will be aggregated, and no authority will be identified without your consent. The information used within the LGA will be held and processed in accordance with our [privacy statement](#); and we will not share it with the organisations listed above unless we have ensured they have the right controls in place to use your information responsibly and only for the reasons for which we have given permission. We are

undertaking this survey in line with the legitimate interests of the LGA in supporting and representing authorities. It will also:

- allow you to compare key data with other authorities
- minimise the number of data requests you respond to from other organisations
- assist in recovery planning, workforce testing and risk profiling, and
- help the LGA evidence our government asks for support and resources.

If you have any queries or problems, please contact roopal.shah@local.gov.uk.

Q2.1 How many staff did you have on 1 March 2020 (that is the usual headcount before COVID -19) and how many staff in the week ending 21 August 2020

Please enter a whole number without a comma or decimal place. Please only include permanent and fixed term staff. If you answered this question for 1 March previously, your answer is already added below.

	Number of staff (headcount)
Headcount of staff at 1 March 2020	
Headcount of staff week ending 21 August 2020	

Q2.2 Do the figures you are providing for this return include or exclude school staff?

- Includes school staff
- Excludes school staff
- Don't know

Q2.3 Have you recruited any additional excluding permanent and fixed term staff in the week ending 21 August?

Yes

- No

Q2.4 How many additional staff have you recruited excluding permanent and fixed term staff?

Please enter a whole number. If you do not know please leave blank. If you answered this question previously, your answer is already added below.

	Number of staff (headcount)
Additional staff week ending 21 August	

Q2.5 Since 24 March when lockdown started, how many local authority staff, if any, have died in service (from all causes)?

Please enter the number of staff. If none, please enter "0". If you do not know please leave blank.

	Number of staff (headcount)
Number of staff died in service	

Q3.1 How many staff, if any, do you currently (week ending 21 August 2020) have in the categories below?

Please enter the headcount. If none, please enter zero. If you do not know please leave blank.

	Number of staff (headcount)
Number of staff furloughed – full time	
Number of staff furloughed – part time	
Number of staff redeployed (both formal and informal, and either internally or externally)	
Number of staff unavailable for work	

Q4.1 For those staff furloughed, what is/are the reason/s?

Please provide the number of staff furloughed broken down by reason for week ending 21 August 2020. If zero please enter "0". If you do not know please leave blank.

	Number of staff (headcount)
Total number of staff furloughed	
Funding has stopped	
Number of staff unavailable for work	
Shielding (or relevant health reasons)	
Caring responsibilities	
Service has been stopped	
Other	

Q5.1 For those staff currently unavailable for work, what is the primary reason?

Please provide the number of staff unavailable broken down by reason for week ending 21 August 2020.

If zero please enter "0". If you do not know please leave blank.

**Self-isolating can be due to any of the following:*

Being in an at-risk group

Believe they are symptomatic

Share a household with someone who is symptomatic

	Number of staff (headcount)
Total number of staff unavailable for work	
Non-COVID sicknesses	
Confirmed / Suspected COVID	
Self-isolation (Test and trace)	
Self Isolation (Other)	
Caring for dependants/at-risk relative/someone who is sick	
Other	

Q6.1 Please select the status of the services to show if there are enough of the right staff to run the service normally or not (at the current level of demand).
This is to allow us to understand whether staff capacity (including redeployed staff) is enough to run the service. It will give us a feel of the pressure points for some of the highest profile service areas.

	Operating normally	Minor disruption	Moderate disruption	Severe disruption	Don't know	Not applicable
Adult social care (directly employed)						
Bereavement services (cemeteries and crematoria)						
Children's services						
Environmental health						
Household waste (doorstep collection)						
Housing and homelessness services						
Planning						
Public health						
Revenue and benefits						
Schools						
Trading standards						

Q6.2 In summary, how would you assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff overall to run services normally or not?

- Operating normally
- Minor disruption
- Moderate disruption
- Severe disruption
- Don't know

Q7.1 At present, do you have enough of the correct PPE for those local authority staff who need it or not?

- More than we need
- About what we need
- Less than we need
- We don't need it
- Don't know

Q7.2 And would you say that, currently, the staff who need testing are able to access it or not?

- All the staff who need testing can access it
- Most of the staff who need testing can access it
- Some of the staff who need testing can access it
- None of the staff who need testing can access it
- None of our staff need testing
- Don't know

Q8.1 Looking ahead

Over the next few fortnights we shall be asking questions to help us understand where councils may need some guidance and support in certain areas. These questions won't be asked every fortnight but they will be asked maybe every other fortnight as you may want to change your answer as your councils circumstances may change.

Q8.2 We have heard from some councils that there are significant difficulties recruiting for certain posts.

Is your authority experiencing recruitment difficulties for some posts or not? *Difficulties may be in the form of a high number of staff vacancies for some posts, or a small number of vacancies that have a big impact.*

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q8.3 From the list of specialist occupations and roles below, please tick those where your council is experiencing recruitment difficulties.

This is whether your council either has a large number of staff vacancies for some posts or it has a small number of vacancies that have a big impact.

Accountants
Adult's social workers
Building control officers
Chartered surveyors
Children's social workers
Economic development officers
Educational psychologists
Engineers
Environmental health officers
Health visitors
Homelessness officers
ICT professionals
Legal professionals
Mental health social workers
Occupational therapists (adults')
Occupational therapists (children's)
Regulatory services officers
Planning officers
Public health officers
School nurses
Social care commissioners
Test and trace team leaders
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)
Trading standards officers
Youth workers
Other (please specify)

Q8.4 For those specialist occupations and roles where you have difficulties recruiting, below, please tick up to five where the difficulties are most acute.

This is whether your council either has a large number of staff vacancies for some posts or it has a small number of vacancies that have a big impact.

Accountants
Adult's social workers
Building control officers
Chartered surveyors
Children's social workers
Economic development officers
Educational psychologists
Engineers
Environmental health officers
Health visitors
Homelessness officers
ICT professionals
Legal professionals
Mental health social workers
Occupational therapists (adults')
Occupational therapists (children's)
Regulatory services officers
Planning officers
Public health officers
School nurses
Social care commissioners
Test and trace team leaders
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)
Trading standards officers
Youth workers
Other (please specify)

Q8.5 For each of these roles where you have acute difficulties, please indicate whether the recruitment difficulty is in recruiting generally, or recruiting at the required level of expertise/experience/qualification?

	Difficulty recruiting generally	Difficulty recruiting required expertise, experience or qualification	Both	Don't know
Accountants				
Adult's social workers				
Building control officers				
Chartered surveyors				
Children's social workers				
Economic development officers				
Educational psychologists				
Engineers				
Environmental health officers				
Health visitors				
Homelessness officers				
ICT professionals				
Legal professionals				
Mental health social workers				
Occupational therapists (adults')				
Occupational therapists (children's)				
Regulatory services officers				
Planning officers				
Public health officers				
School nurses				
Social care commissioners				
Test and trace team leaders				
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)				
Trading standards officers				
Youth workers				
Other (please specify)				

Q9.1 Please enter the details of the person nominated to provide this data for your authority or amend the details we hold below if necessary.

- Name _____
- Authority _____
- Job title _____
- Email address _____

Q10.1

Once you press the 'Submit' button below, you will have completed the survey.

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey. You are in control of any personal data that you have provided to us in your response. You can contact us at all times to have the information changed or deleted. You can find our full privacy policy here: [click here to see our privacy policy](#)



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